

CAN SOMEONE WHO COMMITS SUICIDE BE SAVED?

July 30, 1997 ((David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org) -

QUESTION:

Dear Brother Cloud,

I have read your article "Do We Have The "Right to Die"?", and it brought up an old question that has bothered me for quite some time now. Dr. ----- in one of his newsletters was asked a question from a man who stated that his uncle was a suicide. "Will he be in heaven?" Dr. ----- told the man that "If your uncle knew Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, he will be in heaven. If not, he will be lost. We go to heaven not because of the manner of our death, but because of the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross." I sent Dr. ----- a letter asking him about what he stated in his newsletter, but he never sent me a reply to my questions. Would you consider these few questions and let me know your thoughts on them. Can a person who believes in Jesus Christ as Lord and savior, kill themselves and still go to Heaven?

If eternal life is only given to a person after they receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior, then what is meant in 1 John 3:15 where it says that "...and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."?

If the above Bible verse means that a person who kills himself (which is self murder) does not have eternal life in them, wouldn't this mean that the person never received Jesus as their Lord and Savior, which would then mean that they could never enter Heaven?

Thank you in advance for your time.

ANSWER FROM BRO. CLOUD: Your questions are difficult to answer. I would concur with what ----- said. I believe John 3:16 and many other verses promise eternal life to those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ in the biblical sense, meaning they repent of their sins and trust His shed blood, death, and resurrection for their salvation.

I am not certain it is proper to describe suicide as murder. A study of the term murder in Scripture demonstrates that it means the taking of the life of another person. I don't know any instance in which the Holy Spirit applies this term to suicide. For a believer to take his own life would be more akin to theft than murder. The Bible says we are not our own; we are bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:19,20). We belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. For a child of God to take his life would be to rob God of the use of the rest of that life.

I do believe it is possible for a truly born again Christian to take his own life because of despondency or because of an ailment which affects the mind or for some other reason. There is at least one example of this in the Bible, and that is the case of Samson. Hebrews 11:32 leaves no doubt that he was a true believer.

Beyond this, the Bible says practically nothing about this matter. We can get into serious problems by speculating on matters the Bible does not clearly answer. The Bible does not answer every question we might desire to ask. If you believe 1 John 3:15 answers the matter, that is what you need to believe. I do not believe 1 John 3:15 is referring to suicide.

There is an article at the End Times Apostasy Online Database entitled "Suicide and the Bible" by Pastor Bert Singletary.